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RONALD K. KOTOSHIRODO, Chapter 7 Trustee

IN THE UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT

FOR THE DISTRICT OF HAWAII

In re:) BK. NO. 06-00898
JAMES WILLIAM LULL,) (Chapter 7)
Debtor.) ADV. NO. 09
RONALD K. KOTOSHIRODO, CHAPTER 7 TRUSTEE) COMPLAINT; EXHIBITS "A") and "B"
Plaintiff)
V.)
RICHARD HOWARD, INC., and RICHARD HOWARD, individually,)))
Defendant.	ý)

COMPLAINT

Plaintiff RONALD K. KOTOSHIRODO ("Plaintiff" or "Trustee"), Trustee of the above-named Debtor, for his complaint herein states by and through his

undersigned attorneys as follows:

- 1. This is an action to avoid fraudulent transfers under 11 U.S.C. §§544 and 548, and for recovery of the value of such transfers under 11 U.S.C. §550; for turnover to the Trustee of funds or property belonging to the estate under 11 U.S.C. §542; and is brought as an adversary proceeding in accordance with Bankruptcy Rule 7001, *et. seq.* This Court has jurisdiction to hear this action under 28 U.S.C. §§ 151, 157(a), 157(b)(2)(E) and (F) and 1334(a), and this is a core matter.
- 2. On December 8, 2006, James William Lull, also known as James W. Lull, (the "Debtor"), filed a Voluntary Petition under Chapter 7 in the United States Bankruptcy Court for the District of Hawai'i.
- 3. Plaintiff was appointed as Bankruptcy Trustee for the Debtor on December 8, 2006 for which the Notice of Appointment was filed on December 12, 2006.
- 4. Defendant RICHARD HOWARD, INC. is a corporation doing business in the State of Ohio. Defendant RICHARD HOWARD is, upon information and belief, a resident of the State of Ohio. Defendants are collectively referred to as "Howard."
- 5. Debtor possessed valuable opals (the "Opals") which he testified were conservatively valued at or more than \$2 Million.

- 6. In and about the winter and spring of 2006, Debtor consigned the Opals to Sahara Coins, Inc. ("Sahara"), in Las Vegas. Debtor later became indebted to Sahara.
- 7. In order to satisfy his debt to Sahara, on or about July 8, 2006, Debtor entered into an agreement with Howard whereby the Opals were transferred via Brinks to Howard on July 10, 2006 (the "Transfer") for which Howard paid \$140,000 to Sahara on behalf of Debtor. The invoice for the Transfer described the contents as an "Opal Collection being returned in its entirety; Insurance Value "2.000,000". Exhibit "A".
- 8. On or about November 9, 2007, Trustee caused a subpoena (the "November 2007 Subpoena") to be served on Howard demanding production, *inter alia*, of "[a]ll documents which relate to transactions" between Howard and Debtor including "without limitation ... all deliveries, consignments, sales, pledges or other transactions involving coins, gems, or other property" and "[a]ll Documents in your possession or control which refer or relate to the Debtor's assets, liabilities or financial affairs from 2002 to the present".
- 9. In response to the November 2007 Subpoena, Howard produced documents, but no inventory of the Opals. On January 17, 2008, Trustee's special counsel specifically requested that Howard's attorney produce "a listing/inventory/photograph of those opals". No inventory was provided in

response to that letter. On March 16, 2009, Trustee's special counsel again asked Howard's attorney for production of any inventories of the Opals. After further follow up, on May 5, 2009, Howard's attorney finally produced what Howard represented is a handwritten inventory of the Opals dated July 12, 2006 (Exhibit "B").

10. Throughout the period from December 8, 2005 through December 8, 2006, including the entire period of time during which the Opals were transferred to Sahara and then to Howard, Debtor was insolvent as that term is defined in 11 U.S.C. § 101(32).

COUNT I: AVOIDANCE OF FRAUDULENT TRANSFERS 11 USC §548(a)(1)(A)

- 11. Plaintiff realleges the allegations set forth in paragraph 1-10.
- 12. The Transfer of the Opals was made to or for Howard's benefit with actual intent to hinder, delay and defraud the Debtor's creditors.
- 13. The Trustee is entitled to avoid the Transfer of Opals which was made within two years before the filing of the Debtor's bankruptcy petition herein pursuant to 11 U.S.C. §548(a)(1)(A).

COUNT II: AVOIDANCE OF FRAUDULENT TRANSFERS 11 USC §548(a)(1)(B)

- 14. Plaintiff realleges the allegations set forth in paragraphs 1-13.
- 15. The Transfer of the Opals was made to or for Howard's benefit and

Lull received less than reasonably equivalent value in exchange for such Transfer or obligation; and Debtor was insolvent on the date that such transfer was made or such obligation was incurred, and/or became insolvent as a result to such transfer or obligation.

16. The Trustee is entitled to avoid the Transfer of Opals which was made within two years before the date of filing of the Debtor's bankruptcy petition herein, pursuant to 11 USC §548(a)(1)(B)(i) and (ii)(I).

COUNT III: TURNOVER 11 U.S.C. §542

- 17. Plaintiff realleges the allegations set forth in paragraph 1-16.
- 18. The Opals constitute property of the estate, the value of such property is not inconsequential and, pursuant to 11 U.S.C. §542(a), the Trustee is entitled to an order directing Howard and those acting in concert with Howard to deliver to the Trustee and account for such property or its value.

COUNT IV: AVOIDANCE OF FRAUDULENT TRANSFERS 11 U.S.C. §544(a)

- 19. Plaintiff realleges the allegations set forth in paragraph 1-18.
- 20. The Transfer of the Opals to Howard was made with actual intent to deceive, defraud, obstruct, delay and hinder the Debtor's *bona fide* creditors. The Transfer was made for inadequate consideration, and at the time of the Transfer the Debtor was insolvent and had debts beyond his ability to pay as they became due

and/or intended to incur debts beyond his ability to pay.

- 21. The Transfer was made as part of an ongoing scheme by Howard and the Debtor to hinder, delay and defraud the Debtor's creditors, and they were concealed from the Bankruptcy Court and the Trustee herein as part of such scheme.
- 22. At the time of the Transfer, there were in existence actual creditors of the Debtor with valid claims against the Debtor, and who could have avoided the Transfer under applicable state law.
- 23. The Trustee may avoid the Transfer of the Opals under 11 U.S.C. §544, because the Transfer would be voidable by the Debtor's creditors under applicable state law.

COUNT V: AVOIDANCE OF FRAUDULENT TRANSFERS 11 U.S.C. §544(b) HAWAII UNIFORM FRAUDULENT TRANSFER ACT

- 24. Plaintiff realleges the allegations set forth in paragraph 1-23 above.
- 25. The Transfer of the Opals to Howard was in a violation of Hawai'i's Uniform Fraudulent Transfer Act, H.R.S. Chapter 651C which is recoverable by Plaintiff pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 544 (b).
- 26. Plaintiff is entitled to the remedies set forth in H.R.S. Chapter 651C, including recovery of the fraudulently transferred assets, judgment for damages for the value of the Opals, injunctive relief, constructive trust and equitable liens to

preserve the estate's interests, accounting, and other relief.

COUNT VI: RECOVERY OF VALUE OF AVOIDED TRANSFER (11 U.S.C. §550)

27. Plaintiff realleges the allegations set forth in paragraph 1-26 above.

28. The Trustee is entitled to recover from Howard the value of the

voidable Transfer pursuant to 11 U.S.C. §550(a).

29. In addition to the value of the Transfer, the Trustee is entitled to

recover from Howard prejudgment interest from the dates of the Transfer.

Wherefore, Plaintiff Trustee prays for relief as follows:

1. That the Court avoid the Transfer of the Opals to Howard.

2. That the Court award judgment in favor of the Trustee against

Howard for the value of the Transfer of the Opals, together with interest thereon

and Plaintiff's attorney fees and costs herein, including prejudgment interest.

3. That the Court award such other and further relief as it may deem

equitable and just.

Dated: Honolulu, Hawai'I, May 29 2009.

MICHAEL A. LILLY

STEPHEN A. JONES

Special Counsel for Plaintiff

RONALD K. KOTOSHIRODO

Chapter 7 Trustee

SAHARA COINS, LLC

2580 So. Decatur Blvd., Suite 1-B Las Vegas, NV 89102 (702) 367-4360 ~ (702) 367-8206 Fax

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James W. Lull	
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